21st March, 2002, in All India Judges' Association & Ors. *Vs.* Union of India & Ors. has directed that an increase in the judge strength from the existing ratio of 10.5 or 13 per 10 lakh people to 50 judges per 10 lakh people should be effected and implemented within a period of five years in a phased manner to be determined and directed by the Union Ministry of Law. The Apex Court has further directed that the States as well as the Union of India shall submit their compliance report by the 30th September, 2002.

Accordingly, the Central Government, *vide* letter dated the 25th June, 2002, have addressed the State Governments for taking necessary action to increase the judge strength as per the direction of the Supreme Court. No State Government has responded so far.

Cases pending with various High Courts, Civil Courts and Lower Courts

541. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of cases pending with the various High Courts, Civil Courts and Lower Courts in the country uptil now;

(b) whether shortage of Judges has been considered the main reasons for delay in the judgement in such cases;

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to urge the courts to expedite these cases immediately; and

(d) the concrete steps Government propose to take to meet the situation and also to reduce the arrears in various courts in the country?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. JANA KRISHNAMURTHI): (a) The total number of cases pending with the various HIgh Courts and District/Lower Courts are at Statement I and II as per available information (*See* below).

(b) The main reasons for delay in the judgement, *inter-alia,* include shortage of judges, delays in process service and adjournment of cases.

(c) and (d) The Supreme Court has been expeditiously disposing of pending cases. The Government have been compiling annual reports on pendency of cases in High Courts and District Courts and forwarding them to the High Courts for their information and necessary action. The High Courts have been requested to implement the recommendations of the Malimath Committee to streamline procedure which will, *inter-alia,* expedite disposal of pending cases. Further, the Government have also been constantly reviewing the accumulation of arrears in courts. Besides increasing the Judge strength from time to time, the Government have set up/encouraged alternative modes of dispute resolution including conciliation, mediation, and arbitration. Special tribunals like Central Administrative Tribunal, State Administrative Tribunals, Income Tax Appellate Tribunals, Labour Courts, Consumer Courts, etc. have been set up to expedite disposal of cases. Information technology is being used in generation of causelists, providing information to the litigants/Advocates etc. for speedy disposal of cases. Pilot project for the District Courts has been started for computerisation of City Courts in the four major metro cities of Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai.

Fast Track Courts have been set up for quick disposal of long pending cases, priority being accorded to sessions cases pending for two years or more and cases involving undertrials in jails. All Central Ministries/Departments have been requested to take necessary steps like review of Acts/Laws administered by them, filing of counter-affidavits in time and avoidance of unnecessary adjournments in cases where they are a party.

Civil Procedure Code has been amended and the amendments have been brought into force with effect from 1.7.2002 which, *inter-alia,* limit the number of adjournments which can be granted to a party to three, provide for speedy process service by speed post, courier services, fax or e-mail, authorise the court to fix time limit for oral arguments and provide for a number of other measures aimed at ensuring expeditious disposal of cases.

Statement-I

Number of cases pending in various High Courts in the country (Based on the quarterly reports received from High Courts)

Sl. No.	Name of the High Court	Number of cases pending	As on
1.	Allahabad	8,92,622	12/2001
2.	Andhra Pradesh	1,63,127	12/2001
3.	Bombay	2,93,230	9/2001
4.	Kolkata	42,639	9/2001
5.	Delhi	1,78,001	12/2000
6.	Gauhati	41,317	3/2001
7.	Gujarat	1,29,026	1/6/2002
8.	Himachal Pradesh	17,947	3/2002
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	33,365	3/2002
10.	Karnataka	1,02,648	30/6/2002
11.	Kerala	4,21,337	12/2001
12.	Madhya Pradesh	1,17,141	6/2001
13.	Madras	3,49,836	6/2001
14.	Orissa	1,47,813	3/2002
15.	Patna	80,956	12/2001
16.	Punjab & Haryana	2,34,757	12/2001
17.	Rajasthan	1,32,306	12/2000
18.	Sikkim	117	12/2001
19.	Chhattisgarh	(Newly created High Court)	
20.	Jharkhand	(Newly created High Court)	
21.	Uttaranchal	(Newly created High Court)	
	TOTAL:	33,78,285	

Statement-II

State-wise pendency of cases in the District/Subordinate Court

Sl. No.	Name of States/ UTs	As on	Civil	Criminal	Total
1.	Andhra Pradesh	12/2001	542744	388388	931132
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	06/99	331	1469	1800
3.	Assam	06/2001	37229	118424	155653
4.	Bihar	06/2001	207417	809789	1017206
5.	Chhattisgarh	06/2001	51994	157620	209614
6.	Goa	06/2001	26132	11732	37864
7.	Gujarat	06/2001	704725	2357496	3062221
8.	Haryana	06/2000	197809	305606	503415
9.	Himachal Pradesh	06/2001	69976	73194	143170
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	12/99	43418	82596	126014
11.	Karnataka	12/2001	592380	398960	991340
12.	Kerala	12/2001	229714	437266	666980
13.	Madhya Pradesh	12/2000	298564	853223	1151787
14.	Maharashtra	12/2001	924757	2130671	3055428
15.	Manipur	12/2000	4278	3487	7765
16.	Meghalaya	12/99	1561	11322	12883
17.	Mizoram	12/2000	917	986	1803
18.	Nagaland		Not available		
19.	Orissa	12/2000	135457	556759	692216
20.	Punjab	06/2000	206975	249479	459454
21.	Rajasthan	06/2001	274277	558083	832360
22.	Sikkim	12/98	467	1352	1819
23.	Tamil Nadu	06/2001	593703	267601	861304
24.	Tripura	12/2001	7313	14957	22270
25.	Uttar Pradesh	06/2001	1073234	2431929	3505163
26.	West Bengal	12/99	473325	861754	1335079
27.	And. & Nicobar	12/99	580	26790	27370
28.	Chandigarh	06/2000	15215	33349	48564
29.	Dadra & N. Haveli	12/2001	429	2096	2525
30.	Daman & Diu	12/2000	642	742	1384
31.	Delhi	12/2001	146398	451789	598187
32.	Lakshadweep	12/2000	87	104	191
33.	Pondicherry	06/2001	6204	7239	13443
	TOTAL:				20477404